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DR WHO VISITS DERBY

DR WHO, otherwise known as Tom Baker, took time off from his time machine yesterday and rumbled into Derby by the more conventional means of British Rail.

by TREVOR WILLIS

Pictures: Mike Inman

He was on day one of a promotion campaign for a soup-manufacturing company — a curious alliance, unless it is that particular brand of soup the good Doctor has the habit of landing himself in during his TV adventures.

Over lunch at Derby Playhouse after a hard morning's autograph signing he spoke of a new Dr Who film, his dislike for science fiction — and the day he may quit as the fourth Dr Who in the long-running series.

"I am certain to be Dr Who until December 1978 when my contract runs out. That's about the time the BBC might be thinking in terms of somebody else, I don't know.

"I shall be thinking along the same lines myself. After all it will have been 3½ years since I took over the role."

SELF-SCRIPTED

That, at least will give him time to make another film, which he hopes to have in the can by next March. Entitled Who meets Scratchman, it is self-scripted. Vincent Price will play the dastardly Scratchman.

"That's an old name for the devil which I found in a book I was reading, and liked the sound of. There will be lots of monsters, including the Daleks and they will all be controlled by Scratchman," said the man who is a television star in 28 countries.

One of them is Dubai where the behatted, bescarfed Doctor is greeted with adulation by the Arabs. "Perhaps it's because they don't have that many television sets," he observed.

FRIGHTENED

"We don't seem to go down all that well in America and northern Europe. In Europe people have a different kind of attitude and don't want their children to be frightened. Even in Holland, where we are a success, it's not considered a children's programme and is put on late at night.

"In America, they have just made a film called The Space Wars and it's expected to gross 200,000,000 dollars, a smash hit.

"It's taken all the science fiction forms, and put them all together with terrific charm. But it's in a vacuum, there's no competition.

"I don't think it compares with our thing at all. It's very good fun but the monsters are quite benign. Our emphasis is on the characters, theirs is on all the hardware.

FACE TO FACE with a monster at Derby Playhouse — just to make Dr Who feel at home.

DR WHO has a smile for staff and patients at the hospital.

"I'm not keen on science fiction, science fantasy, yes, which is what Dr Who is, plus a measure of zaniness and humour.

"In science fiction you concentrate on the detail. You have to think what a bus will be like in the future. With science fantasy, like Dr Who, you mainly forget about the travel and jump from action to action."

With that he gathered his famous scarf and hat, declared that he wanted to clean his teeth, and went off to visit the kids in hospital.

He returned to the Playhouse later in the afternoon, however, to judge a children's monster-making contest, 40 entries on show altogether.

Winners of the £50 first prize were St George's School, Littleover, with a big green monster with bulging white eyes. Runners-up were St Edward's, of Swadlincote, with a huge blue monster with a red tongue and Reigate Junior School, Mackworth Estate, with a monster impressively covered in spikes.

Talk on violent young offenders

DISTURBED violent young offenders was the subject of a talk by a Sheffield solicitor, Mr G. E. Birmingham, to members of Soroptimist International of Alfreton and District.

This is part of a two-year project by the Alfreton group to collate information from different professional people about the problems of young people in society.

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